SYDNEY ANARCHIST NEWS may 95

Hi folks,

Information seems to be the flavour of the month round here and so this issue is crammed full of it, sorry about the lack of pictures but you gotta send them in to see them.

The Visions of Freedom conference continues to send ripples thru the @ community, not least of which is the debate around the organising of Noam's tour - get the backstage goss inside. The VoF collective has distributed the profits of the conference to @ projects round the country. A cassette and a video of the have been made of the Noam nite by Community Access Teknowledgy - see the mail order form on the back page. The VoF book is well on the way and the editorial collective are looking forward to laying it out very soon on the new computer at CAT's Media Room which is now purring in the back room at Black Rose Books.

The recent fun(d)raiser, MAYHEM, went off something chronic with $1800 after costs donated to set up the community activist bulletin board, ***Catalyst.*** This will be used to add a second computer for desk top publishing (making posters, pamphlets and books) a large hard disk drive, and other bytes and pieces to make Catalyst a public access @ info centre - see CAT page for more.

A great effort for all involved, just shows what can happen when we all work(play) together and combine our skills out side the money system.

Thanks to all the performers and DJs who donated their skills for free, to all the collective and their friends who chipped in, and to all those who came along and danced making Mayhem a night to remember.

A special thank you to Laurie for his untold efforts in running the coolest underground venue and community space since jellyheads. The jelly PA is now paid off and in the hands of the community thanks to the Golden Ox . . . on the eve of it's eviction.

So lets think of a good home for it's continued life as the people's sound system.

A tape was made of the live performances that nite by Non Bossy Posse, Telharmonium, and Spore. Be on the lookout for Mayhem in cool dance music shops, Black Rose, or from the POBox.

Thank you for your support,
John J, for the CAT collective.

catalyst@sysx.apana.org.au POBox 13 Enmore 2042
c/o Black Rose Books 583a King St. Newtown, 2042. 519 9194

THE BIG PAYOFF !

Visions of Freedom splits the profits.

Listed below is the breakdown of monies to be distributed among anarchist activities throughout Australia out of the profits from the Visions of Freedom Conference. In deciding amounts, the collective took into account a number of factors including the amount requested, the clearness of the stated uses for the money and any assistance provided by each group or individual in making Visions of Freedom happen.

REQUEST RECEIVED FROM	REQUEST	ALLOTTED
1. Thea Swift Fund for Anarchists in Need.	not specified	
2. A Media Institute Debt Fund.	$1500	$300
3. Anti-Election Conference (June)	$500	
4. Jura Books' Distribution plans.	$1000	
5. Rebel Worker	$1000	$750
6. second anarchist media room.	$1000	
7. The Anarchist Newspaper.	$500	$500
8. Neighbourhood News(Brisbane).	$500	$150
9. Anarchist Black Cross (Brisbane).	$100	$175
10. Black Rose Books.	$500	$525
11. Holus Bolus (Brisbane)	$100	$100
12. Media Room Project.	$1000	$525
13. Pamphlet publishing (Brisbane).	$100	$100
14. National liberation scholarship idea.	$7000	$nil
15. technological 'connectivity' idea	$500	$nil
16. Lillian Geddes' pamphlet.	$500	$200
17. Coalition Against Police Violence video.	$500	$300
18. Ecofeminist w'shops with Koori women.	$500	
19. Ecofeminist Actions Newsletter.	$200	$375
20. Delegate to UN Conference on Women(Beijing).	$300	$nil
21. Bougainville Human Rights Report		$100
TOTAL VALUE OF DONATIONS:		$4000

Thanks go to all supporters of the Visions of Freedom Conference the success of which made the distribution of these funds possible.

The Visions Collective. April 95

FREEDOM FOR EAST TIMOR

This 8 page (A5) document pertains to Chomsky's visit to Australia (Jan. 1995) in support of the East Timor struggle. Visions of Freedom(VoF) produced (9/2/1995) an open letter to the East Timor Relief Association (published in the Autumn 1995 Sydney Anarchist Quarterly & elsewhere). ETRA has replied as enclosed. I have sent a detailed response to some of ETRA's specific points (which is available on request, & published in 'The Anarchist', No.3), but we enclose here a briefer (& more general, less turgid) response. We aren't aware of any other public contributions to this 'debate'. We have shown this document to ETRA, inviting them to make any further response.

Peter McGregor, a member of Visions
(c/o 110 Crystal St., Petersham, 2049)

18 May 1995

Is open debate between political groups useful or desirable? While the answer to this question would seem to be clearly 'yes', such debate is often difficult to put into practice without involving suspicion and defensiveness. The suggestions put forward by the Visions collective regarding Chomsky's visit and ETRA's handling of it were not expressed through any wish to damage the East Timor movement, but arose out of a genuine sense of unhappiness at how matters had progressed, and a desire to express and hopefully resolve this unhappiness.

Many quite trivial issues could be tossed back and forth between Visions and ETRA in discussing this matter, issues that do not do justice to the intelligence and integrity of both parties. It is true that Visions offered ETRA a critique of national liberation as a complete solution to social disease. Had ETRA recognised the Anarchist movement as always sympathetic to and supportive of the East Timor struggle, perhaps this critique would have been received in a different spirit. Instead, what was meant to inspire discussion and reflection has only caused offence.

It is also true that the Anarchist movement does not face the day-to-day urgency of struggle that East Timor groups do, but this is not to say anarchists have no experience of such urgent matters. The point is that we are not ignorant or unfeeling of your struggle. However, this awareness on our part does not, cannot, preclude us from adopting a critical stance toward all politics, including our own, for instance, many anarchists, and of course others, would be critical of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip without forgetting or trivialising the historic victimisation of Jews around the world. Anarchists are likewise involved in a critique of their own movement over issues of sexism and homophobia, among many.

If ETRA believes that the nature of their struggle exempts them from any critical perspective, even that offered in sympathy, it would be interesting to discuss this. Anarchists may learn from them (or who knows, vice versa!) As it is, such an idea seems to carry serious implications regarding ETRA's answerability to the people of East Timor and to all the valuable people concerned with justice.

by Suzanne Fraser, a member of Visions (April 1995)

Noam Chomsky Tour Office

Tel.(02) 891 5861; Fax.(02) 891 2876
East Timor Relief Association
PO Box 23, Fairfield NSW 2165
Tour Coordinator: Agio Pereira
Media Liaison: Ines Almeida

*An open letter back to Visions of Freedom**

Dear Friends,

We are in receipt of your letter of 9 February and are somewhat perplexed as to its content and the vehemence of its tone. We rather thought *Visions of Freedom* (VoF) would have been pleased to have a speaker of Professor Chomsky's calibre deliver the keynote address at their conference, resulting, no doubt, in record crowds for an anarchist event and considerable financial profit for your movement. We thought, moreover, that the obvious success of your event might have prompted a more appreciative note to ETRA/CNRM; not only for initiating and organising Noam Chomsky's visit to Australia and thus making his talk at your event possible, but for facilitating such a prominent Saturday night timeslot. Curiously, this has not been the case and we make the following points in response to your recent missive.

As you correctly state in your letter, ETRA/CNRM were the organisers of Prof. Noam Chomsky's Australian tour, the primary purpose of which was to raise awareness on East Timor. (We note, by the way, your use of inverted commas around the word tour and are puzzled by their usage in this instance). While he was here, Prof. Chomsky was keen to speak on a number of other topics and particularly to those groups from whom he'd had long-standing invitations. It was always ETRA's aim to facilitate a broad-based tour for Chomsky's visit, while ensuring that the key focus was to raise awareness on Indonesia's illegal occupation of East Timor. Prof. Chomsky gave 10 public talks during his 8 days in Australia. Three of these talks were on East Timor (each delivered in a different city) with the remaining seven on a range of topics reflecting the breadth of Chomsky's work and contribution to a number of fields. A wide range of media outlets were approached by ETRA to cover Prof. Chomsky tour. These included community radios such as 2SER/Sydney and 3CR/Melbourne, The Melbourne-based community TV CH31 also filmed Prof. Chomsky's talk in Melbourne Town Hall for later used to reach the wider community. Even in New Zealand, we organised an interview for Prof. Chomsky with the popular mainstream TV station TV3 which has an audience of more than a million people. Prof. Chomsky also was interviewed by ABC radio award winning program "Background Briefing". His talk at the National Press Club was transmitted live to the entire nation and was repeated recently also due to public demand. IN eight days, Prof. Chomsky spoke to 16000 (sixteen thousand people) covering, we believe, the entire spectrum of his expertise. We believe this was a very broad-based visit. Indeed, the success of the tour in this regard speaks for itself.

In the early planning phases of the tour, ETRA/CNRM hosted a number of large meetings in which a range of groups and individuals were invited to make suggestions re the organisation of the tour as a whole and to indicate their interest in hosting a Chomsky talk. Peter McGregor represented the anarchist movement at these meetings and we find it extraordinary that your letter claims a 'reticence' on behalf of ETRA to 'collaborate with other groups'. The views outlined in your letter were at times expressed by Peter McGregor at these meetings, in phone conversations, and in 'open letters'. Yes, Peter McGregor did make lots of suggestions, some of which are mentioned in your letter. And the fact is, that we didn't always agree with him. We remind you, furthermore, that ETRA did offer for one of our organising committee to address an organising meeting for your conference to outline ETRA's

strategy for the tour. This offer was declined by Peter McGregor who said he preferred to communicate ETRA's position to the conference committee himself. It is clear from your letter that this was not done adequately.

The anarchist vision, whether that be on 'political freedom', 'the essential Chomsky' or 'how to organise a visiting speaker's tour' is just one version. It is not universal. As tour organisers, we became acutely aware that it was impossible to please everybody: various people would push their own agendas, would put forward their own version of the most salient issue in the Chomsky repertoire, of how things 'should be done', and - my real favourite - a firm conviction of 'what Noam would really want'. There were a lot of different interests, and at times competing agendas, involved and, in the end, it was up to ETRA as the organisers of Chomsky's visit to make judgements on a range of issues. This was done in strict consultation with Prof. Chomsky himself, both before he came and while he was here.

With regard to your comments on ETRA's Friday night talk, we don't believe we need to justify anything to the anarchist movement re decisions made on how to present such an event. Yet, just as the anarchist movement made decisions as to the program and form of their own event, ETRA too - to borrow a phrase from Frank Sinatra - 'did it our way'. The Timorese Resistance understands the difficulties of our struggle, and after twenty years, we have learnt to respect the work done by all parts of our Resistance. As a people fighting twenty years in extremely difficult ciscunstances for self-determination and independence at a mammoth cost of one third of our population, we have learnt to respect the work and sacrifice of our own people and our real friends. We have, above all, learnt to not to view our work as separate compartments; and to view all work as part of a whole puzzle which is the freedom of our people. We do acknowledge the publicity support given by the anarchist conference to East Timor Friday night talk. In return, ETRA promoted *VoF*'s event: constantly referring inquiries to your organisation in the week preceding Noam's visit and granting the anarchist movement a free stall at our talk. (One could also argue that ETRA's name was used to promote the *VoF* event which was advertised, in part, as a fundraiser for ETRA). It is true that *VoF* was not thanked on the program of our event which was reserved for those organisations whose support had been substantial and unconditional. Regrettably, support from the anarchist movement for ETRA has never been unconditional but has always been dependent on securing Chomsky for their conference and pushing their own political movement.

Each other organisation which charged an entrance fee for their Chomsky talks kindly shared those proceeds with ETRA, as the tour sponsors, along similar lines as was negotiated with the *VoF* conference. ETRA certainly appreciates these contributions. Yet, not only did none of these other groups seek acknowledgment on our program, no other group has seen fit to accompany their cheques with two pages of ruminations and sage advice as to how the East Timorese should interpret and pursue their struggle.

We were rather surprised that the *VoF* conference thought it was their role to dictate not only how ETRA might spend its money (for which ETRA has an elected Board of Directors and Timorese who live daily the plight of the people of East Timor), but how the East Timorese people should interpret their struggle and 'the nature, the form and the content, of the resistance'. As predominantly white, middle-class Australians, you do, perhaps, have the luxury of pontificating at length on the finer philosophical points of 'political freedom'. For the East Timorese, who remain stateless in a world which is organised politically (albeit imperfectly) into nation-states, 'mere self-determination' (as you put it) is indeed a very real, highly prized, tangible objective. It may well have been the role of your conference to discuss at length and in abstract, the various meanings and manifestations of 'political freedom' and 'social justice' etc., but to criticise the East Timorese struggle for seeking independence and self-determination, to suggest, in fact, that you have another 'better idea', is arrogance beyond belief.

We acknowledge receipt with thanks for the $4,500 cheque. We had heard informally, however, that the net profit from the anarchist talk was $14,000 whereby -according to our agreement - $7,000 would be our share. The $14,000 profit figure is certainly more congruent with the proceeds one would expect from a Town Hall packed to capacity, and we would appreciate a budget acquittal detailing your arrival at our share of $4,500.

Despite your complaints, we believe Chomsky's visit was enormously successful. Not only was each public speaking address packed to capacity, the visit succeeded in raising a number of issues concerning East Timor and Australia - self-determination, the Timor Gap treaty, Australian rifle sales, national interest - in the media, as was the primary aim of his tour. AETA, for example, reports a sudden rush of membership since Chomsky's visit underlining the tour's success in galvanising the Australian public's support for East Timor and refuting your claim that ETRA's 'territoriality' was to the detriment of other solidarity and social justice groups in Australia. All the organisations involved with Noam's tour can not help but to feel happy with the overall success of the tour. Moreover, Noam himself, at both the end of this visit and since his return to the US, has said how pleased he was with ETRA's organisation and management of his visit. Given Chomsky's stature, his wide appeal and star-like status, there were bound to be people who felt that their vision of the 'essential Chomsky' was not realised as it might have been if only everything had been done 'their way'. What a pity, though, that the anarchist movement which might have been content with a hugely successful event and considerable profit, continues to distinguish itself by responding with pettiness, acrimony and hubris.

Yours~~faithfully~~,

Agio Pereira
Executive Director (ETRA)
Tour Coordinator
20 February 1995

** We make this reply an 'open' one but leave it to you to circulate it to those people who received your initial open letter. As we don't have a copy of your mailing list, we can hardly do this ourselves. We are confident, however, that the spirit of 'freedom' which your organisation espouses will ensure our response is treated fairly and, therefore, circulated as widely, as openly, and as freely as your own letter.*

COMING EVENTS

(ie., various East Timor events)

May 25 (Thurs) 5-6 pm Monthly VIGIL outside Garuda Airlines, cnr. Castlereagh & Hunter Sts. city. Details: Stephen 3315986

May 26 (Frid) Bushdance fundraiser: Petersham Town Hall 7.30pm. Ring PND 3194296 or 015662749

May 27 (Sat) Fretilin function, White Eagle Hall, Cabramatta. Ring Harold 7978717

June 7 (Wed) AETA meeting, 6.30 pm Leichhardt Town Hall

July 10-12 'Peacemaking Initiatives for E. Timor' Conference at ANU. Contact Michael Salla, ph:(062)494697, fax(6)2495054

July 26-28 'Indonesia & Regional Conflict Resolution' Conference in Darwin (+anti-"Kangaroo '95" military events). Contact Rob Wesley-Smith ph/fax (089)832113; PO Box 2155, Darwin,0801

Dates to remember: Aug. 1 (Anti-Kangaroo '95 Protests ?); Aug. 17 (Indonesian Independence Day); Oct. 16 (Balibo 5 Anniversary); Nov. 12 (Dili massacre, 1991); Dec. 7 (Indonesian Invasion, 1975); Dec. 11 (Timor Gap Treaty signed 1989)

CAT@LYST

A COMMUNITY ACTIVIST BULLETIN BOARD, INTERNET ACCESS, AND DESKTOP PUBLISHING COLLECTIVE

email
catalyst@sysx.apana.org.au
phone 519 9194
modem 557 7043

Our home is Black Rose Anarchist Bookshop, 583A King St Newtown during shop opening hours, 11-6 weekdays and 12-5 Saturday.

We meet 7.30 Tuesday nights at the shop if you are interested in finding out more.

CAT, an electronic info centre

Some time ago a group of people came up with the idea of setting up an access media centre along the lines of a community radio or television station. A year of planning, learning and funraising later, the project has a new home and is ready for your input.

Aware that the gap between info rich and poor is widening, the project is about challenging and changing mainstream media culture. Established as an example of anarchy in action, CAT operates as a non-profit, non-hierarchical collective which aims to address issues of access, equity and sharing of teknowledge.
We're the public transport, pushbikes, and pedestrians on the information super hypeway. People friendly technology without the jargon.

CAT is a totally independant, self funding, community resource. Donations of equipment, ca$h, and energy are what it runs on. The more help given to maintain and build it up, the better the service provided.
We'd also like to hear from community groups and individuals to find out what they want from an electronic info centre.

Desk top publishing.

Design and lay out posters, pamphlets, and books.

Catalyst, a community bulletin board.

*Internet e-mail & news * Calendar of events * Contact listing * Data base of issues, groups, campaigns and radical info.*

anarchist

POW WOW

come along, meet people, share ideas, plan actions and projects, get inspired, see what sydney's anarchos are up to.

1-4pm SUN 18 June

St Stephen's hall Church St Newtown

ALL WELCOME

Then stick around for AlfAlfa Food CoOp's Winter Soulstice celebration
cheap yummy food and uplifting music

NOAM ON TAPE!

Community Access Teknowledgy is proud to announce the signing of hot talent Noam Chomsky. The audio and video tapes of the Sydney Town Hall gathering join CAT's lyst of releases.

Visions of freedom - Noam Chomsky, Rosemary Gillespie and a c@ast of thousands. See Bob Gould in a scratch mix frenzy, produced by Subvertigo. 150 mins video $30, audio $10.

Aidex - CATV's ground breaking doco on the Aust arms trade and the successful protests against it. Sneak into the trade only weapons show with CAT's SmuggleCAM™. 45 mins video $20.

Christiania - World's largest autonomous zone. With 1000 people, this free community has been squatting and growing in the heart of Copenhagen since the 70's. An inspiring docco of the revolution of every day life. 62 mins video $20.

Undercurrents 1 - A grass roots activist video zine from the UK. Squatters, travellers and ravers vs. the Ciminal Justice Bill. DIY media stunts. Pushbike mayhem, and an inspiring coverage of mass anti motor-way actions. 72 mins video $20.

Odd womyn in - Voices against violence from wimmin of Perth. By Stella Simmering 18 mins video $10.

Saboteurs of the big daddy mind fuck - Non Bossy Posse's technorganarchy. 42 mins audio $10.

All prices include postage, please make all payments out to the Media Room Project. As part of Catalyst's role in spreading @ info we seek other tapes to distribute.

Community Access Teknowledgy

"Pedestrians, public tansport and pushbikes on the information super hype way"

catalyst@sysx.apana.org.au POBox 13 Enmore 2042

c/o Black Rose Books 583a King St. Newtown, 2042. 519 9194